

Message Text

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PAGE 01 JAKART 15545 170952Z
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 L-03 H-01 CU-04 IO-13
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 INR-07 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 IGA-02 OMB-01
TRSE-00 /089 W

-----019341 171549Z /41

R 170910Z NOV 77
FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5052
INFO AMCONSUL MEDAN
AMCONSUL SURABAYA

C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 15545

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, ID, PINS
SUBJECT: BUNG TOMO ARRESTED

REF: (A) JAKARTA 15301, (B) JAKARTA 15288

1. DRS. SOETOMO (POPULARLY KNOWN AS BUNG TOMO), WHOSE
RECENTLY PUBLISHED ANTI-GOVERNMENT POLITICAL TRACT WAS JUST
BANNED (REF A), HAS BEEN ARRESTED BY THE JAKARTA KOPKAMTIB
UNIT (LAKSUS). ACCORDING TO A LAKSUS SPOKESMAN, BUNG TOMO'S
ARREST WAS UNRELATED TO THE PUBLICATION OF HIS ANTI-GOVERNMENT
BOOK BUT WAS PROMPTED BY SEVERAL OF SOETOMO'S RECENT
UNIVERSITY LECTURES WHICH HAD "DISTURBED SECURITY AND ORDER
IN THE CAPITAL CITY".

2. SOETOMO WAS TAKEN FROM HIS HOME SHORTLY AFTER MIDNIGHT
TUESDAY BY A SMALL LAKSUS UNIT OPERATING UNDER WRITTEN ORDERS
FROM JAKARTA'S NEW MILITARY COMMANDER MAJ. GEN. NORMAN SASONO.
ACCORDING TO BUNG TOMO'S SON BAMBANG SULISTOMO (WHO WAS
HIMSELF IMPRISONED FOR MORE THAN TWO YEARS FOR INVOLVMENT
IN THE 1974 MALARI RIOTS), SOETOMO'S FAMILY WAS GIVEN THE
CHANCE TO PACK HIM A SUITCASE FULL OF BOOKS AND CLOTHES,
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WHILE BUNG TOMO WAS PERMITTED TO FINISH HIS MOSLEM MIDNIGHT
PRAYERS AND WRITE A LETTER PROMISING NOT TO COMMIT SUICIDE,
TRY TO ESCAPE OR RESIST HIS JAILERS WHILE IN CUSTODY.

3. ACCORDING TO LAKSUS, SOETOMO IS NOW BEING INTERROGATED
AND NO DECISION HAS YET BEEN MADE ON WHETHER HE WILL BE
FORMALLY CHARGED IN COURT.

4. COMMENT: DESPITE THE LAKSUS DENIAL, BUNG TOMO'S ARREST IS ALMOST CERTAINLY RELATED TO HIS BOOK AND THE FUROR IT HAS CAUSED. THE PRESIDENT HAS BEEN STUNG BY THE INCREASINGLY FRANK CRITICISM AND CONFRONTATIONAL TACTICS OF STUDENTS AND OTHERS (REF B) AND THE GOVERNMENT, BY ARRESTING BUNG TOMO, IS CLEARLY WARNING OTHER POTENTIAL DISSIDENTS THAT IT FIRMLY INTENDS TO KEEP THE LID ON UNTIL SUHARTO'S MARCH RE-ELECTION AND THAT ITS PATIENCE IS NEARLY EXHAUSTED. WHILE THE STUDENTS MAY BE A BIT MORE CAUTIOUS IN THE NEAR FUTURE, HOWEVER, THEY ARE ALMOST CERTAIN TO KEEP PRODDING THE GOI. SOETOMO'S SON BAMBANG, WHO IS STILL WELL-CONNECTED AND ACTIVE IN STUDENT CIRCLES, HAS ALREADY INDUCED SEVERAL JAKARTA UNIVERSITY STUDENT COUNCILS TO PETITION LAKSUS FOR HIS FATHER'S RELEASE AND FURTHER AGITATION OVER THE BUNG TOMO CASE SEEMS INEVITABLE.
RIVES

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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